United Nations A/54/211

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 August 1999

Original: English

**Fifty-fourth session**
Item 48 of the provisional agenda*
**The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti**

## Letter dated 6 August 1999 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I last reported to the General Assembly on 10 May 1999 on the situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti (A/53/950). I now wish to bring the General Assembly up to date on developments concerning the International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH), our joint mission with the Organization of American States (OAS) in Haiti, which will have an impact on our continuing efforts there.

MICIVIH was established in 1993 as a joint mission of OAS and the United Nations, charged with monitoring, verifying and strengthening human rights conditions in Haiti. This joint mission has contributed significantly to the efforts of the Government of Haiti to strengthen democratic institutions and protect the human rights of its citizens and is viewed as a prime example of the close collaboration between our two organizations. By its resolution 53/95 of 8 December 1998, the General Assembly decided to renew the mandate of MICIVIH until 31 December 1999.

By a letter dated 4 June 1999, the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States informed me that, owing to recent financial constraints experienced by his organization, an imminent reduction of the OAS component of MICIVIH would be necessary. As of 1 July 1999, OAS has withdrawn 34 members of its personnel and only one OAS contracted staff remains, the Executive Director, who has been jointly appointed by the Secretary-General of OAS and myself. Five of MICIVIH's nine regional offices have been closed since that date.

Since receipt of the above-mentioned letter of the Secretary-General of OAS, discussions have taken place between officials of the United Nations and OAS on the reduction of the OAS component of MICIVIH and the effects of that reduction on the operation of the joint mission. These discussions have focused on two main issues, namely the payment by OAS of its share of the joint expenses incurred up to the time of the reduction of OAS personnel, and the new modalities of cooperation, including financial arrangements, for the remaining period of the mandate of MICIVIH, on the basis of a significantly reduced OAS component. Such issues will be addressed in revisions to the

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Memorandum of Understanding between OAS and the United Nations for MICIVIH, which was concluded on 17 July 1997.

Accordingly, and subject to the above, the United Nations and OAS have agreed to continue their cooperation in MICIVIH as a joint mission between the two organizations. Whilst the decision of OAS to withdraw all but one of its staff will necessarily have an impact on the functioning of MICIVIH, I believe, however, that, despite that decision, the joint mission will be able to carry out the core activities of the mandate at a meaningful, though reduced, level. It is therefore envisaged that the United Nations component of MICIVIH will remain at the same authorized level for the duration of its current mandate.

I indicated in my last report (A/53/950) that much remained to be accomplished in Haiti with regard to the strengthening of State institutions and civil society organizations, essential elements of an exit strategy of the joint mission. I believe that the international community must continue to work together to ensure that the reforms and the strengthening of local capacities achieved so far are maintained. May I draw your attention, in particular, to paragraph 8 of the Economic and Social Council resolution of 27 July 1999, which recommends that the General Assembly review all aspects of MICIVIH's mandate and operations in light of the situation in Haiti and consider renewing the mandate of the United Nations component of the joint mission.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/95, I shall be submitting to the Assembly, at its fifty-fourth session, the second report on the implementation of the current mandate of MICIVIH, together with my recommendation on future action to be taken. In the meantime, I should be grateful if you would bring the contents of the present letter, including the attached letter from the Secretary-General of OAS (see annex), to the attention of the members of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

# Annex

## Letter dated 4 June 1999 from the Secretary-General of the OAS addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations

I write to inform you that, owing to recent financial constraints being experienced by our organization, an imminent reduction in the Organization of American States (OAS) component of the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH), our joint mission with the United Nations, will be necessary.

During the last decade, the protection and promotion of human rights and democracy in Haiti has been of paramount importance to our two organizations. The United Nations and the Organization of American States have together played a very active and important role in a process that ultimately restored constitutional order in Haiti in 1994. Despite significant advancements, today Haiti's nascent democracy continues to face many challenges. MICIVIH, which, at the request of the Government of Haiti, was formed in 1993 as a joint mission between the OAS and the United Nations, has been charged with monitoring, verifying and strengthening human rights conditions in Haiti. The joint mission, which serves as an exemplary showcase of close collaboration between our organizations, has made significant contributions to the efforts of the Government of Haiti to strengthen democratic institutions and protect the human rights of its citizens.

After six years in the country, the OAS component of MICIVIH faces serious financial difficulties. Our total financial contribution to our joint initiative, approximately US$ 40 million since the mission's inception, has been funded through external resources from OAS member and permanent observer States. Recent financial donor constraints, however, have made the continuation of the OAS component of the MICIVIH in its present form increasingly difficult.

I understand that the United Nations mandate for MICIVIH, which was approved through 31 December 1999, will be affected by the reduction in the OAS contribution of both human and financial resources. Therefore, I have instructed the General Secretariat of OAS and, in particular, the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy, to continue to work closely with your Secretariat in order to achieve an appropriate and united response to this situation. This will necessarily entail a revision of the Memorandum of Understanding between our two organizations governing the joint operation of MICIVIH. I am greatly encouraged by the conversation that I have had with Assistant Secretary-General Alvaro de Soto and I trust that we will continue to build on the excellent relations that our organizations have fostered through this joint effort.

(*Signed*) César **Gaviria**